Transcript of **Public Hearing**

Date: October 29, 2015

Case: State of Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board

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ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES REVIEW BOARD

BEFORE HEARING OFFICER JUAN MORADO, JR.

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IN RE: :

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL STREATOR :

OF THE HOSPITAL SISTERS OF THE : No. E-017-15

THIRD ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS; :

HOSPITAL SISTERS HEALTH :

SYSTEM; HOSPITAL SISTERS :

SERVICES, INC. :

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -x

PUBLIC HEARING

Streator, Illinois

Thursday, October 29, 2015

9:38 a.m.

Job No.: 93886

Pages: 1 - 72

Reported By: Paula Quetsch, CSR

Hearing held at the location of:

STREATOR CITY HALL
204 South Bloomington Street
Streator, Illinois 61364
(815) 672-2517

Before Paula Quetsch, CSR, and Notary Public in and for the State of Illinois.

PRESENT:

ILLINOIS HEALTH FACILITIES AND SERVICES
REVIEW BOARD, by
JUAN MORADO, JR., Public Hearing Officer
SENATOR BRAD BURZYNSKI, Board Member
JEANNIE MITCHELL, Assistant General Counsel
GEORGE ROATE, IDPH Staff
525 West Jefferson Street
Second Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761
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P R O C E E D I N G S

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Good morning. My name is Juan Morado, Jr. I'm accompanied by Senator Bradley Burzynski, member of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board, and board staff members Jeannie Mitchell and George Roate. We are in Streator to conduct a public hearing on the proposed project known as Exemption E-017-15, St. Mary's Hospital, Streator. As per the rules of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board, I would like to read the legal notice into the record.

"In an accordance with the requirements of the Illinois Health Facilities Planning Act, notice is given of receipt of the discontinuation of an existing health care facility, Exemption Application E-017-15, St. Mary's Hospital. The hospital is located at 111 Spring Street, Streator, Illinois.

The applicants are St. Mary's Hospital Streator of the Hospital Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, Hospital Sisters Health System, and Hospital Sisters Service, Inc. St. Mary's Hospital Streator of the Third Order of St. Francis is a 90-bed acute care hospital. The operating entity/licensee is St. Mary's Hospital Streator of the Hospital Sisters

of the Third Order of St. Francis, and the owner of site is the Hospital Sisters Health System.

There's no capital cost to this transaction, and the anticipated completion date is December 31st, 2015. A Safety Net Impact Statement was submitted as required per 20 ILCS 3960. Consideration by the State Board has been tentatively scheduled for the November 17th meeting of the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board in Bolingbrook, Illinois."

If you have not done so, please sign in using the appropriate registration forms. If you filled out one of the white forms, that's to indicate that you wanted to register your appearance here today but that you would not necessarily be giving comments.

One form is for the individuals who wanted to provide testimony, and that was the yellow form, and on that form you indicated whether you were for or opposed to the project.

To ensure that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board's public hearings protect the privacy and maintain the confidentiality of an individual's health information, covered entities as defined by the Health Insurance Portability Act of 1996, such as facilities, hospital

providers, health plans, and health care clearinghouses submitting oral or written testimony that discloses protected health information of the individuals shall have a valid written authorization from that individual. The authorization shall allow the covered entity to share the individual's protected health information at this hearing.

Those of you who came with prepared text for your testimony may choose to submit the text without giving oral testimony. However, if you are giving oral testimony, please be as brief as possible. Due to the number of individuals who have expressed an interest in providing testimony, we will be limiting each oral presentation to two minutes. As per the legal notice, I would appreciate two copies of your testimony. When you make your presentation, please give the court reporter the spelling of your complete name.

If there is a chief spokesperson for the applicant, we would like that individual to make the first presentation. The remaining testimony will be taken in order of the names as people registered today. Please hold your questions until all testimony has been presented.

Is there someone from the applicant who wishes to make their presentation at this time?

MR. ROATE: We wish to call Mary Starmann-Harrison.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MS. STARMANN-HARRISON: Good morning. My name is Mary Starmann-Harrison and I serve as the president and CEO of Hospital Sisters Health System.

Our decision to seek the discontinuation of services of HSHS St. Mary's Hospital was a very difficult one and one that was made after a long, thoughtful discernment process. It was a decision that was reached after looking at how best to ensure that the residents in Streator continue to have access to high-quality health care services for the long term.

In today's health care environment and going forward, patients are increasingly receiving care not in the hospital but in the outpatient setting, their physician's office, or their home. We've witnessed this trend away from inpatient care to outpatient care for many years at HSHS St. Mary's Hospital. As a result, HSHS and health care providers across the country are constantly evaluating on how best to

deliver the right care, in the right setting, at the right time. Within that context we looked at what would be the best health care delivery model in Streator for the long term future.

At HSHS we've focused on what we call our care integration strategy. This strategy is about aligning all the touch points that a patient encounters when dealing with an injury or illness so that their care is highly coordinated, easily accessible, and affordable. When care is highly coordinated, patient outcomes improve and costs go down.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We can't hear.

MS. STARMANN-HARRISON: Because St. Mary's is two hours away from the nearest HSHS hospital, St. John's in Springfield, we have found it very challenging to integrate care into this community with the rest of our system. Proximity matters in delivering highly effective health care services, and St. Mary's lack of proximity to HSHS tertiary hospitals and physician specialists has prevented us from fully implementing this care integration strategy.

Because of this challenge we looked at who

is best able to deliver highly coordinated cost-effective high-quality care to this community. We concluded that OSF HealthCare is in the best position to carry on the Hospital Sisters' legacy of healing in this community.

We believe OSF can offer residents robust outpatient services and access to primary care and physician specialists due to their proximity of their network of services in this region. OSF is a leader in health care services in this region and has the resources to provide this community with high-quality and highly coordinated care.

We also wanted to transition health care services to an organization that shares our health care values and has a long track record of caring for patients in this area.

I know that many Streator residents will question whether the change from an inpatient hospital to a robust outpatient model is the best course. I firmly believe and the Hospital Sisters believe that this collaboration is what's best for Streator going forward.

So, in summary, HSHS believes the community will benefit from having OSF deliver health care

services with their robust network of physicians and facilities located in close proximity to Streator. With the Board's approval of our certificate of exemption, we expect this transition of health care services from HSHS to OSF would formally occur on January 4th, 2016.

Thank you all.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: We didn't hear a thing you said.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

The first person we're going to be having come up is Joyce Kmetz, a concerned citizen. Joyce.

MS. KMETZ: I am a concerned citizen.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I'm sorry, Ms. Kmetz, if I can have you please state your name and spell it for the court reporter.

MS. KMETZ: Joyce Kmetz as a concerned citizen.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: If you could spell your name for the court reporter, as well, please.

MS. KMETZ: J-o-y-c-e and Kmetz is K-m-e-t-z.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MS. KMETZ: Well, I was at the hospital meeting last time and I am a concerned citizen. I'm

very concerned about our community.

After the meeting we were talking to one of the directors from OSF, and he made a statement that really hit home with me. He said, "Bricks and mortar do not form the health care that's within."

So it doesn't matter what kind of bricks and mortar, what kind of building. Okay? So I don't feel that we really need to rebuild. I think we need to use the facility we have.

And I'm not against OSF. I think it's going to be wonderful health care, and I think it will it be a very good benefit for our community, but what concerns me is the closing of a hospital with in-house care. Because we have so many seniors within the community, as well as the rest of the people, but they can't travel, you know.

And I'm a member of the St. Vincent's Society here in Streator and I see -- one of the things I do is give people rides. And St. Vincent's is to give care to those who are in need within Streator, and the number of rides I give just around town, but we've also brought people home from St. Francis. We have taken people for like follow-up checkups. We have taken people to Peru to Galey Eye

Clinic. There are so many things that we have done out of town, and there's a lot of them that go out of town more so than I will. I mostly do in town, but I will go to Peru.

But I see the need of the people here, and this is concerning me, and I believe that our hospital can be made possible with the running of it to keep a facility for us with in-house care. It troubles me greatly because I see the needs in our community.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Ma'am, could you please wrap up your comments?

MS. KMETZ: Pardon me?

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Could you please wrap up your comments?

MS. KMETZ: Okay. I wanted to stress that. And, also, Streator is a good community. I was in business and I saw the change once there was a change in the hospital, and I saw the change in the financial. That's a trickle-down. That's only one little person here.

Streator is full of very wonderful people, and they're charitable, and they're dedicated, and I believe that we need to keep our hospital.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you, ma'am.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Sister Maureen O'Connor.

SISTER O'CONNOR: Good morning. I'm Sister Maureen O'Connor, Provincial Superior of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis. On behalf of the Sisters, I affirm the decision to discontinue our health care ministry in Streator and transition many of the services we provide to OSF HealthCare.

This was not an easy decision. Our founding sisters arrived in Streator in 1887, and through the support of the community they founded St. Mary's Hospital. Through the intervening years, our health care ministry has evolved to ensure that the care of the patient was always our priority.

The people of Streator and the surrounding communities have taken great pride in St. Mary's Hospital, and we are profoundly grateful for their generosity, dedication, and the commitment to our mission. The physicians, colleagues, volunteers, and sisters who have served at St. Mary's throughout its history and who continue to serve today have been the common thread of our Franciscan health care ministry, bringing Christ's healing presence to those in need.

On a personal note it was 45 years ago that

I arrived in Streator to serve as a pediatric nurse. St. Mary's was my first assignment after graduating from Marillac College. I lived and served in this community for three years and cherish many fond memories of my days in Streator. So, as you can imagine, I am also filled with nostalgia as I stand before you asking you to approve our plans to hand over our healing ministry to another Franciscan health care provider.

We firmly believe that OSF HealthCare is in the best position to lead the health care ministry into the future so that the health care needs of the residents are met over the long term. OSF has a strong presence in the area. Through their extensive network of physicians, hospitals, and outpatient services, they're well positioned to deliver high-quality, integrated health care to the residents of this community.

As Mary stated in her remarks, our network of health care services is centered two hours southwest of here, so it is difficult to deliver highly integrated health care services for the Streator residents.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your

comments.

SISTER O'CONNOR: In summary, our decision to transition services to OSF HealthCare was made to ensure health care will be available here well into the future. I ask that you support our application to close St. Mary's Hospital so that OSF can assume our mission and provide quality coordinated care for the residents in this area.

Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Sister, if you could leave two copies of your testimony on this table, please. Thank you.

Next I'd like to call Gertrude Stansbury.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you. If you could please remember to spell your name for the court reporter, that would be very helpful.

MS. STANSBURY: I always have to. G-e-r-t-r-u-d-e. Stansbury, S-t-a-n-s-b-u-r-y.

And I'm a very concerned citizen. I was born here; I was raised here; had my children here, four children with many trips to the emergency room; and my husband, also a senior citizen, is in poor health, and so he's made a lot of trips here, not just

in the ER; we use the hospital.

So my major concern is for my grandchildren growing up. They need a place where they can go for emergencies without having to go 20, 30 miles, and I have a member of my family who has cancer and he's in -- he has a wound which bleeds, and he's been in the emergency room six times since Easter and helicoptered to Peoria three times, and some wonderful people in the ER room saved his life, and he's here today and enjoying life. His health is shaky but he's still here and enjoying his life.

I think we need for our community to know that there's not just as ER, but we really need a hospital that can take care of us. And I worked at a nursing home, and I know about senior citizens and the care they need. I am a senior citizen, and I think we need it for the whole community. It covers a big territory.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Sister Judith Ann Duvall.

SISTER DUVALL: My name is Sister Judith Ann Duvall. I'm chairperson of OSF HealthCare System, and I am honored to speak to you today in support of HSHS

and their application, which is Project No. E-017-15.

There is a very strong bridge between the care that HSHS has provided Streator and the care that OSF will provide for you, and that bridge is our mutual recognition of and commitment to the sanctity of human life expressed in our service of his people.

Both HSHS and OSF recognize that each and every person has a right to be cared for and has a right to receive that care that they need close to home. Both groups have blessed the communities that they have served in for more than 100 years with a commitment to care for the sick and the poor. Like HSHS, OSF brings, too, the healing ministry of Christ and his church to the whole person, body, mind, and spirit, and do it with compassionate competence.

Because OSF shares this dedication, I have complete faith and confidence that this proposal will be what is best for the residents of Streator. I speak on behalf of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis when I say that we look forward to collaborating with this community to provide outpatient and other services in Streator with the focus on meeting those physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of its people.

I'd like to close using a greeting that St. Francis of Assisi often used. It's Latin but I'll define what it means. Pax et bonum. And it means peace and all good to each of you.

Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Edward J. Flanigan.

MR. FLANIGAN: Good morning. My name is Edward J. Flanigan, and I oppose the proposed closure of St. Mary's Hospital.

A year ago OSF began sponsorship of a hospital in Mendota, Illinois, a city of more than 7,000 people in LaSalle County with demographics very similar to Streator. OSF chose to keep it an inpatient facility despite several nearby hospitals. Meanwhile, Streator faces the proposal to close its hospital, forcing more than 20,000 people residing in our 61364 zip code to travel 19 miles to the nearest hospital.

Recent reports in the newspaper state that the funds from the Friends of St. Mary's Hospital are in excess of $2.7 million and will remain with OSF's foundation for use in Streator. Perhaps these funds, as well as the funds that will be used to build a new

outpatient facility, could be used to fund programs to recruit physicians to Streator and thereby support the necessary hospital admissions and services.

Economic development is challenging in Illinois, and we need our hospital to remain viable. Our officials are working in many ways, including supporting a trade show featuring Streator-made products to interested organizations in Illinois, marketing our enterprise zone and tax increment financing districts while pursuing new TIF districts, and reaching out to startup businesses with the site obtained for a business incubator. We need our hospital to entice business to this community.

Streator has a well-maintained hospital that needs effective management to serve this community into the future. Minutes matter in the health care of our citizens, and Streator needs to keep an inpatient hospital.

The citizens of Streator and the surrounding communities have supported St. Mary's over its 128-year history and will continue to support this hospital.

Thank you for your consideration of keeping this hospital open.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Dr. David Gorenz.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: If you could speak into the microphone so everyone can hear.

DR. GORENZ: David Gorenz. G-o-r-e-n-z, David.

Good morning. My name is Dr. David Gorenz, and I'm the regional CEO for OSF HealthCare System.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Speak up.

DR. GORENZ: I am speaking in support of the HSHS application which would allow OSF to develop a new health care system for the residents of Streator.

One thing we have been very mindful of during the transition process has been to meet the unique needs of the residents of the Streator community. That's why OSF will offer Streator residents an integrated care delivery system that provides the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

We all know that health care is changing. Many medical procedures that once required a hospital stay can now be performed on an outpatient basis, saving patients time and money. OSF's plan for health care in Streator will reflect this new delivery model

with a state-of-the-art outpatient center providing high-quality services such as specialty physician clinics, primary care services, mammography, imaging, laboratory, rehabilitative services, and, pending promising legislation, emergency care.

With primary care physicians locally and access to our integrated network of specialty providers throughout the OSF HealthCare system Streator residents will be able to receive the medical attention that they need in their community.

We look forward to building on the strong HSHS health care foundation and are committed to providing high-quality health care for the residents of Streator.

Thank you for the time and for considering a yes vote.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Joe Scarbarry.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Sir, make sure you spell your name for the court reporter and speak into the mic, please.

MR. SCARBARRY: It's kind of hard -- my name is Joe Scarbarry, S-c-a-r-b-a-r-r-y. It's very hard

to hear out there, so I don't know what's been said.

I feel compelled to come before you. I think this is a travesty what's going on.

My concerns are, one, that the ambulance care in this town is going to dramatically change. I don't know how the Senate is going to vote, but as far as the ambulance service, we are not prepared.

It's come to my attention that the major investors are doctors on OSF boards. By hauling people to Pontiac, Peru, Ottawa, the fees are going to go up. It's so much per mile. There's going to be enormous amounts of money to be made. My concern is who is going to make that money. I think it's definitely a conflict of interest that you have doctors owning the ambulance services that are transporting the patients.

I don't know how many studies have been done, but they keep saying low numbers of people in their beds, and there is a reason for that. They have closed 6th floor; they have closed 3rd floor. They have done everything they can to reduce the numbers.

Nobody is considering except the plans OSF has to move forward, but we have a perfectly good facility, and I believe the biggest problem, folks, is there's no doctor pool for HSHS. OSF has that and by

bringing doctors into this community, there's no reason this hospital cannot be kept open and pull doctors for emergency care and get 3rd floor back.

(Applause.)

MR. SCARBARRY: We have seen no studies to prove that otherwise, and I think that it should be looked at, and that's all I have to say. But thank you for your time.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Gregg Genseke.

MR. GENSEKE: Hello. My name is Gregg Genseke. It's G-r-e-g-g, G-e-n-s-e-k-e. I'm just speaking as a resident. I've been here all my life; my family has been here all my life, as long as St. Mary's, over 100 and some years.

I've had a lot of excellent care at St. Mary's along with all the rest of my family members, and I appreciate everything they've done in the past. I just think it's another nail in the coffin of Streator if we do lose our hospital because, again, the travel that people are going to have to do, the emergency care, the time it takes to get to another hospital. I just think it's a shame for this

town to lose that facility.

Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Peter Mannix.

MR. MANNIX: Peter Mannix, M-a-n-n-i-x.

Good morning. My name is Peter Mannix and I serve as the HSHS vice president for strategy development and implementation. In my role at HSHS, I'm tasked with looking at data and trends in health care and planning for the future.

Throughout my career in health care I've witnessed remarkable changes in how health care is delivered. In most cases those changes have been positive for patients. Advances in medical technology, new clinical protocols, and new care delivery models are allowing people to live longer and healthier lives. Procedures that a decade ago may have required an overnight hospital stay are now completed in the morning and the patient is home by the afternoon.

As Mary mentioned a few minutes ago, there is a trend away from inpatient care to outpatient care. We've witnessed this for many years at St. Mary's Hospital in Streator.

Ten years ago, in 2005, there were nearly

3500 inpatient admissions to St. Mary's. Last year St. Mary's had 1300 inpatient admissions. For every 10 Streator residents who are admitted to a hospital, 8 choose to leave the area and go to another hospital.

However, outpatient visits have been on the rise. In 2005 St. Mary's had 7100 outpatient visits. Last year that number was over 120,000. Today more than 75 percent of patient encounters at St. Mary's are for outpatient services.

So as we looked at the best model for health care in the future for the Streator community, we determined that the robust physician services and ambulatory care sites that OSF currently offers in the region best meet the need for patients today and in the future. We believe this model will work in Streator.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information with you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Jody Ogle.

MS. OGLE: My name is Jody Ogle, O-g-l-e. I'm just a concerned citizen. I'd like you to consider some facts about our town and our local hospital.

According to the City of Streator

comprehensive plan from 2014 our population is nearly 20 percent elderly. The need was expressed for modernizing and improving women's health care. St. Mary's our second largest employer, generating 48 million in revenue annually. And one of the challenges highlighted is a mobility challenge. Elderly and low-income individuals without access to a car suffer due lack of public transportation infrastructure.

My concerns are echoed by a study published by The Rural Health. Physicians after rural hospital closure complain of difficulty recruiting and retaining physicians in remaining health care facilities, increased travel times to receive hospital services. The most significantly affected vulnerable populations include elderly, disabled, and economically disadvantaged.

Presently OSF has no infrastructure in place to address the issue of increased travel time for citizens that need it the most. With no promise or plan of a stronger ambulance, increased transportation, or even promise of increased physician availability in our town, the loss of a full-service hospital is an unnecessary detriment to the well-being of over

30 percent of our community.

As shown by a hospital profile report, our hospital is not insolvent. Our number of beds are comparable to St. Elizabeth's 25 miles to the north. Our low volumes are a product of strategy, not marketplace. As evidenced by the profile report, the patient net payor revenue mix are similar to OSF's two nearest facilities in terms of Medicaid/Medicare revenue.

Our volumes are artificially deflated as a result of HSHS's efforts to under-resource our location in terms of physician resources.

(Applause.)

MS. OGLE: One example is evident in women's health care, where this tactic has allowed the justification to close the maternity ward. Births at St. Mary's dropped from 214, averaging around 200 in 2010/2011 under CEO Sharon Simmons to 70 under John Flanders 2013/2014. Obviously, if there are no resources to serve women in our town as a result of their strategy, hospital births will drop dramatically.

Circumstances such as this have allowed OSF and HSHS to leverage their common religious order to

effectively eliminate possible marketplace competition which would have been the result of another health care system, keeping our hospital open.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MS. OGLE: In light of this and in light of the fact that according to St. Mary's, our hospital has an estimated total economic impact to our community of $119,916,386 I ask that you consider opposing this request to close our hospital.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you very much.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Okay. We've been at this for a little over a half hour now. I know we do have a lot of people here. I want to give the opportunity to some folks who are sitting, who are standing on the wall, so that maybe they want to let some other people in and kind of rotate out, give some other folks an opportunity to take part and listen in, as well.

So we'll take a quick two or three minutes so we can let some people filter in and out. I appreciate your cooperation. Thank you.

(Recess taken, 10:12 a.m. to 10:14 a.m.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you very much; I really appreciate that.

George, if you can go ahead and read off the next individual.

MR. ROATE: Michelle Conger.

MS. CONGER: Michelle, M-i-c-h-e-l-l-e; C-o-n-g-e-r.

Good morning. My name is Michelle Conger and I am senior vice president and chief strategy officer of OSF HealthCare. I'm speaking today in support of Project No. E-017-15 submitted by Hospital Sisters Health System.

As with any health care transition such as this one that will soon take place in Streator, it has been very important to OSF to focus on employees and how they are managed through this transition. Our employees are the life blood of OSF HealthCare System, and we know that HSHS shares that reverence for its employees.

I am happy to say that OSF has taken tremendous efforts to ensure that HSHS employees are aware of the many opportunities to bring their expertise to OSF. OSF has provided bonuses for HSHS employees, waived benefit waiting periods, and has

already made offers to nearly 100 HSHS employees.

OSF is not buying St. Mary's Hospital but rather is continuing service in its place. This important distinction furthers OSF's goal of keeping HSHS employees and families in Streator and creating a new system of care that focuses on creating a healthier community. OSF in partnership with the City of Streator is developing an innovative, technology-focused, sustainable health care delivery system that will serve as a model for other rural communities throughout the U.S.

We will continue to work with HSHS employees to identify opportunities for them with OSF and further our collaboration with Streator residents to build a healthier community.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Donald Luckey.

MR. LUCKEY: Donald Luckey, L-u-c-k-e-y.

As a concerned citizen, like most everybody else in here -- can you hear me?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: No.

MR. LUCKEY: As a concerned citizen, like

anybody else, I was born and raised here in Streator. I've worked at St. Mary's Hospital. I enjoyed working there.

I think we need the facility here. It is very important. I mean, I've had heart surgery two times, and I went to the emergency room. They've taken real good care of me. I don't like the idea of driving for 25 or 30 minutes to another hospital. I'd just like to keep it here in town.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Brittney Ahrendsen, A-h-r-e-n-d-s-e-n.

MS. AHRENDSEN: Hello. I'd like to thank you for allowing me to speak to you. My name is Brittney Ahrendsen. I'm a registered nurse and a clinical manager of the dialysis clinic in Streator.

The reason I'm here today is to talk about my concern for the patients in our unit present and future. The thought of the nearest ER being 15 miles or 24 minutes away is of great concern. We do not call 911 unless there is truly an emergency, a patient at risk.

Two-thirds of all dialysis patient deaths

are attributed to cardiac arrest. They can happen at any time, including but not always in the dialysis unit. I've done CPR numerous times in the outpatient dialysis outpatient clinic. It takes about 10 minutes for an ambulance to arrive while we are performing CPR, breathing for the patient with an Ambu bag and defibrillating, if necessary. We cannot intubate; we don't not have resuscitative medications that we can give; we only have ourselves, normal saline, oxygen, suction, and a defibrillator. When the ambulance arrives, it will take the crew several minutes to stabilize that patient. So before the patient can make the 24-minute trip to the nearest ER in Ottawa, the patient has already had approximately 20 minutes of CPR.

Time is of the essence during an emergency, and I feel that the mortality rate for the patients at the Streator dialysis clinic who develop a life threatening emergency while in the unit could increase greatly. Myself and my staff spend approximately 15 hours per week together with the patients, and it breaks my heart that they will be at an increased risk without a nearby emergency center. It is of great importance for there to be at least a freestanding ER

in Streator. This does not impact just my patients --

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MS. AHRENDSEN: -- it impacts the entire community of Streator, many of whom are children who are accident prone. It's a serious matter for all citizens of Streator.

Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Bryan Park.

MR. PARK: Bryan, B-r-y-a-n; P-a-r-k.

To the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board: My name is Bryan Park. I'm a Streator firefighter but, more importantly, a Streator resident. I'm only here today because I think for the past several years Streator has been done a great disservice by HSHS. I don't know if any of the words spoken today will change anything, but I think it's important that we all hear what has to be said.

It has become apparent to me over the last few years that HSHS just doesn't really care about the Streator community. This is evidenced by the lack of doctors that they've recruited to work in Streator.

Admissions at St. Mary's have been down for the last few years. That's not news to anybody around here. HSHS hasn't adequately staffed St. Mary's. It's simple; no doctors, no admissions. My wife and I have been looking for a doctor for years, just a family practitioner. We can't find one in Streator. Since 2007 my wife has been forced to drive to Ottawa/ Peru to see her OB/GYN. There simply aren't enough doctors here. That's HSHS's fault.

I've heard the rumors that HSHS says it's hard to bring in doctors to Streator. I think that's bogus; I think that's an excuse. That way of thinking tells us all we need to know about HSHS's view of Streator.

Streator is a good town. No, we might not have the a mall; we don't have a Buffalo Wild Wings, but we have plenty to offer. We have plenty of need for a hospital. The bottom line is this, HSHS didn't bring doctors to our town, now they're claiming admissions are down and the closing is justified. Because of their ineptitude, our town will suffer without a hospital.

Now to my second point. My question is, why wasn't our hospital put up to bid for sale? Maybe

another group was interested in buying our hospital.

(Applause.)

MR. PARK: We may never know because the bidding process never happened. So why is Streator being held hostage by an ideology. Just because they share the same views doesn't mean that everyone in the community does. No hospital group is ever going to get the chance to run the Streator hospital. We're not going to know if it's possible or not. Nobody was shocked when it was released that they were for sale. The communitywide hope was that someone was going to come in and provide a better service.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MR. PARK: As it stands, they've gifted the hospital to OSF.

To the Board, I implore you to think of the people of Streator when you make a decision. We have not been dealt a fair hand. If it remains as it is, people will suffer. Streator needs and deserves a properly managed hospital and adequately staffed. HSHS will say that Streator doesn't need one, that our community can't support a hospital. They'll try to prove it by saying admissions are down. The reality is

this: Streatorites didn't get a chance to support our hospital. The numbers from HSHS don't tell the truth. The lack of doctors and services has forced people to go elsewhere, most of the time, coincidentally, are not to OSF hospitals.

To finish out, I'll ask this: Is mismanagement a justifiable reason to take away a community's health care system?

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Dan McCormick.

MR. MC CORMACK: M-c, C-o-r-m-a-c-k.

Good morning. My name is Dan McCormack, and I serve as president of the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis Foundation. I'm here briefly to explain our plans to transfer funds raised for HSHS St. Mary's Hospital to OSF HealthCare for use here in Streator.

St. Mary's Hospital has enjoyed generous philanthropic support in this community over the years, and currently there are approximately $2.7 million in accumulated assets in St. Mary's Foundation fund.

With the upcoming of transition of health care services from HSHS to OSF, the value of those assets will be transferred to OSF HealthCare

Foundation when our agreement is finalized. We've notified St. Mary's donors that the money they've donated in the past to St. Mary's will continue to benefit the Streator community. Under the terms of our agreement with OSF, the OSF HealthCare foundation has committed to use the transfer of funds solely to support health care services provided by OSF here in Streator. Where the funds are restricted to a particular purpose, the OSF HealthCare Foundation also recognize the gift restrictions that have been placed by the donors.

Thank you for the opportunity to share this information morning.

MR. ROATE: Sean Peters.

MR. PETERS: Sean P-e-t-e-r-s and I'm speaking today in opposition to the plan to close St. Mary's Hospital.

I'd like to thank the Sisters for their years of service, but Streator needs a hospital whether it's Catholic or not. I'm well familiar with the Franciscan values, especially the one of humility, and part of being humble means if the Sisters are having a hard time running St. Mary's, they should admit that others may be able to do a better job than

they have and should have opened up sale of the hospital to non-Catholic hospitals like Roman Advocate and Illinois Valley Community Hospital.

I've heard -- I don't know for sure whether the Diocese of Peoria blocked the sale of St. Mary's to a non-Catholic hospital, but I think the State needs to look into that. Our health must not be held hostage to the Diocese -- our health care belongs to all of us whether Catholic or not. I'm Catholic and I look at St. Francis, and I think he'd want us to have our hospital in Streator regardless of whether it's Catholic or not. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Kathleen Iverson.

MS. IVERSON: K-a-t-h-l-e-e-n, I-v-e-r-s-o-n. I didn't have anything -- I just thought I would talk.

I think it's a big loss if we do lose our hospital here. We have such a large senior citizen population that really needs our care, and they can't be driving 20, 30 miles, especially in the deep snow in the wintertime and stuff to get services that they will be needing, and I just think we really need to keep our hospital. Whether it's OSF or HSHS, we need a hospital here and that's it.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Rob Tyne.

MR. TYNE: T-y-n-e.

I'm here speaking as a citizen of Streator -- I love Streator -- but I'm also speaking about civic lessons and sociology lessons. We have a right to speak. We also have a right to sociology. Any data that you collect can be misconstrued.

I still remember Sister Magdalene, "There will always be a hospital, Rob, in Streator, always," hand raised like this I remember, me not being Catholic.

Right of speech. I have a right to speak and I will. Will my one voice make a difference? Will it sway the vote that may have already been done? I hope it does. I have 26 young people sitting here, standing here.

(Applause.)

MR. TYNE: They represent 4,000 students in this city, Head Start, preschool, elementary, private, public, our friends in Woodland to the south, here, community college. What happens to them when they get sick or their foot gets broken on a football field if

we don't have a hospital here or inpatient care? They're our future.

I preach Streator. Don't you comment negative about Streator to me because I'll let you have it with both barrels and reload again. You need to invest in Streator. And these young people, go get your college education, come back, bring your wisdom and knowledge and help us build up. That's my speech. Here's my civic virtue.

Virtue is defined as the cultivation of conformity to a standard of right, a beneficial quality of merit, change for technology. I think those who want a freestanding emergency room here in Streator, we thank you for all the work that you've done, but we need more. We need more.

The true values that the Sisters brought here in 1887 and to OSF in 1876 took care of the will of the community free of charge, free of charge, my Lord. We need to continue that mission legacy with a hospital that remains open for the good people of Streator to care for them.

Maybe the data on HSHS is misconstrued. As a former board member of the Friends of St. Mary's, I know how hard we worked to raise money. And getting

doctors here, I didn't see very much. I didn't see people go out into job markets and bring them in, take them to communities, "This is our school. We're very proud of it," both Woodland and Streator and Marquette, we take that.

But civic investment goes to my third civic lesson for my kids today. I encourage you to look at St. Mary's in a different light. Think outside the box and keep the hospital here. Make us a prototype for civic investment.

Like Streator, many towns -- our founding fathers and mothers, you passed the cemeteries on the way here, they gave three years of their salary to build a hospital. The young kids in this classroom did the penny march to build a hospital. We owe it to them to keep it.

We have a community that you cannot beat us on volunteerism; you cannot beat us on community spirit. We will give to the last red penny that we have in our pockets for the kids who are sick, and old people, and the houses that burn down. You can't beat our community spirit.

(Applause.)

MR. TYNE: If you do not have a hospital

here in Streator in the wintertime, as somebody alluded, if 23 south closes, what do we do? We can't travel on it. What about our kids here? What about you? My parents are old and I take the responsibility of taking care of that parent because it's my job --

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MR. TYNE: We must maintain a hospital here. Because AFib, you can't get to the hospital in time; it's too late. Diabetes, you can't get to a hospital; it's too late.

My final part. OSF, if you take over this hospital, you have vast knowledge and wisdom and financial resources to reconstruct that institution to make it something that the people of the state of Illinois will say, "I want to move there; I want to be part of that community." Please, please, whatever you have to do, keep the hospital here.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I just want to take a moment to say thank you for being here, students, here today. It's encouraging to see a wide variety and diverse group up here today.

I think we're going to let the students exit, so we'll just take a quick break. This is not a half day. You do have to go back to class.

MR. ROATE: Next I'd like to call Greg Spradling.

MR. SPRADLING: Greg Spradling, S-p-r-a-d-l-i-n-g.

Everything I've read in the paper focuses on they have to cut because of finances and stuff. It's all based on population of 20,000. I work in Vactor. One-third of our plant doesn't live close to here. You've got Owens is on the upswing; ALM is going to bring trainees in from around the world. The young families in town have no sick care available. Economy says you lose your job if you're not there.

The elderly -- I'm getting there. I've got an aunt that's 101 yet, so I consider myself young. But I'm a baby boomer. In my room at work, we have 12 guys. Three have already had heart attacks; they're all younger than I am. When you reach a certain age, you need that hospital. You don't need to be shuffled here and there and everywhere. That's stress upon stress.

The hospital is supposed to be birth to

death. We have to stand vigils with the visitors coming in and out for our people. That's not being shown with the studies.

It's an older country and it's getting older. That's not even the main focus on this. You guys close that hospital up, then you're going to do a study on people as they're falling off. That's horse out of the barn already.

Okay. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Jeff Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is Jeff Williams. This message is more a statement than a single question.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: We can't hear you.

MR. WILLIAMS: This message is more a statement than a single question. I'm speaking in opposition to the existing plans.

To begin, I believe that as a community we are grateful to HSHS for an extraordinary dedication to health care in Streator for an extremely long time. Thank you to HSHS. Unfortunately, that tradition is coming to an end.

I also believe that there is an

understanding that HSHS has been struggling in Streator for a number of years, as it seems most hospitals are struggling across the country. The struggles can be attributed largely to the chaos in health care inflicted partly by insurance company rules and practices and especially recently by government intervention through the Affordable HealthCare Act, Obamacare; second, policies, knowledge, and practices that have moved much of health care to be performed on an outpatient basis for cost effectiveness, thus, less inpatient services, and other governmental regulations such as the vote to allow a standalone ER and reimbursement rates.

I believe OSF could make this hospital sing if they chose and given the chance by HSHS versus closing the hospital. As much as HSHS is a business organization, with the not-for-profit charity status, regulation aspects, and the extensive government payments through Medicare and Medicaid, it is a quasi-public or quasi-governmental enterprise.

I attended the HSHS/OSF education information meeting last night with many other community members. The meeting stated that they were interested in community input and community understanding of the

process. The timing of such a meeting the night before a regulatory meeting seems extraordinarily curious, especially when a St. Mary's Hospital doctor and surgeon stated that even the doctors had not been previously solicited for input. It would appear to me that it was more for show and practice before this regulatory hearing today.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MR. WILLIAMS: If, as the City of Streator has claimed, that St. Mary's was never presented for sale to the 12-plus health care providers the hospital stated that they had identified in a Times article and that only OSF was worked with, then I believe the community should feel betrayed, and I do if these circumstances are true.

If only HSHS would work with a prospective buyer, I believe there is a possibility that Catholic leadership potentially was seeking to reduce health care competition for the benefit of the support of the Catholic religious and Catholic health care systems. Closing the hospital and some services in Streator will effectively move the majority of Streator health

care to other OSF health care facilities, largely to Ottawa, Pontiac, and Peoria.

My first desire would be that a white knight attended last night's meeting and today's regulatory hearing, has liked the community's participation past and present, and will express a desire to purchase St. Mary's to be an operating hospital.

Should that desire not be the case, I would prefer consideration be given to a different entity being donated the hospital resources that the present arrangement would provide OSF. OSF can provide vision and services as a tenant in the existing hospital facilities rather than building a different facility and possibly tearing down the hospital facility. This would make OSF the first occupant in the repurposing of the existing hospital facilities.

The OSF vision of health care: 1) Technology; 2) different methods; 3) other improvements; and 4) standalone emergency room and heliport facilities which presently exist --

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MR. WILLIAMS: -- can be done in the present facility, leasing only a portions of the facility that

OSF needs. Then only the balance of the facility would need to seek additional repurposing. Some repurposing potentially could be synergistic with prospects of Veteran's Administration care, nursing home care, senior or assisted-style living, laboratory services for other providers, doctors' offices such as Dr. Ricca's office moving to the third floor, food services from the existing kitchen for one or all of the prospects.

Nonsynergistic prospects might be college campus extensions, sterile facilities, or research facilities. An example would be hybrid seed research. Additionally, functioning in the existing facility would decrease the prospect of demolishing the facilities, leave room to grow back into hospital facilities, and add back outpatient surgical services.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you, sir.

MR. WILLIAM: And I believe there are other prospects for repurposing.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I appreciate it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Toni Pettit.

MS. PETTIT: Good morning. Can you hear me

back there?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Yes.

MS. PETTIT: I'm Toni Pettit, P-e-t-t-i-t, and that's the feminine version, T-o-n-i, please.

As Greg Genseke stated, closing our hospital is a nail in the coffin of Streator. Ours is an aging community. Our citizens will be underserved by the health care system proposed.

Kansas, Texas, Georgia have experience with these facilities, and studies show that when rural hospitals close, towns struggle to stay open. There is no pot of gold at the end of that rainbow. What we will find is an increase of 1.6 percent unemployment, a decrease of $1,000 per capita income, loss of future industries, an increase in our real estate inventory, and economic struggles for our business community. Young families will be less likely to consider locating here.

Not only will our economic health suffer, so will the care of our citizens. No inpatient care, no outpatient surgeries, 28 minutes in light traffic to the nearest hospital. The two organizations involved will benefit, while our citizens will not.

At yesterday's community forum CEO John

Flanders of St. Mary's stated 28 physicians had been recruited, but he was only able to retain one. Is this the fault of the Streator community or the policies of St. Mary's?

Members of the audience, including a doctor at St. Mary's, spoke of mismanagement by HSHS. Streator will not be better off if our hospital closes. Communities smaller than ours can support a hospital. With different manage perhaps so can we.

I ask you to vote against closing St. Mary's Hospital. If HSHS does not see a future in Streator, then sell the hospital to an organization that does. I'm not the first one who made that statement today nor will I probably be the last. Has the hospital been offered to other organizations is a question many Streatorites are asking. Perhaps Streatorites would chose to remain in Streator for health care if it were better staffed and managed.

I implore you to deny their application to close St. Mary's. More than 20,000 people's health and lives depend on it. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Spencer Lawrence.

MR. LAWRENCE: Good morning. My name is

Spencer Lawrence; S-p-e-n-c-e-r, L-a-w-r-e-n-c-e. I am a retired Presbyterian pastor, and I'm here to argue in favor of keeping St. Mary's Hospital open.

The nearest hospital to us is in Ottawa; the second nearest is in Pontiac. Ottawa's hospital is at least 16 minutes away. If an emergency room vehicle could get to someone's home in 5 minutes, and the EMTs can get a sick person ready to transport in 10, they could be at St. Elizabeth in Ottawa in 31 minutes at the very best after receiving the call. Getting to St. James in Pontiac would take even longer. If a person lived outside our community, it would likely take even longer than that.

Not having a hospital would place the residents of our community and surrounding communities at serious risk. In addition, it would add burdens to the already overly burdened. The elderly and the poor, some reasons that OSF is planning to close St. Mary's because they're on Medicare and Medicaid, along with everyone else would have to travel out of town for a simple doctor's visit. Besides the inconvenience it would add extra cost to many who can barely make ends meet now.

Not only is not having a hospital hazardous

to our health; it is hazardous to our community. If Streator would not have a hospital, why would a doctor or anyone want to move here? There would be no good reason. For a community that has already lost hundreds of jobs because of cutbacks at the local glass container factory and now the potential loss of jobs at the hospital, one of Streator's major employers, any additional disincentive to move here could do serious harm to our community's overall welfare.

I ask for your support in retaining our hospital in Streator. It would continue to meet the health needs of our citizens and help protect the overall quality of life here.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: It's been a little bit over another half hour now. We wanted to give a chance for more folks to cycle in. If they wanted to leave, they can go ahead and do so and let some folks come in and take those seats.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping these facilities safe. We have a few empty seats if some folks want to try to fill those in. We've got a couple more empties if anyone wants to sit down.

MR. ROATE: Next I'd like to call Jack Dzuris, D-z-u-r-i-s.

MR. DZURIS: Jack, J-a-c-k; Dzuris, D-z-u-r-i-s.

My name is Jack Dzuris and I'm the Streator Area Chamber of Commerce executive director. I also serve as chairman of the HSHS St. Mary's Foundation Board. I'm here today to express my support for HSHS's application.

In my role as Chamber executive director, I know hospitals provide a strong foundation for economic growth. OSF HealthCare's new state-of-the-art outpatient center would create new jobs and attract further investment from others who recognize the promise that Streator presents.

As the chairman of HSHS St. Mary's Foundation, I've seen how communities can benefit from the philanthropic outreach that a hospital can provide. I know firsthand that hospitals and businesses can work together to build a strong community, and it's a necessity that they work together.

HSHS and OSF have identified a shift in the health care system. Treatments that were once costly inpatient procedures can now be performed on an

outpatient basis. The decision to provide Streator with a care center that reflects these changes is good for the health of Streator residents and good for the health of Streator's economy.

I respectfully ask the Board to approve HSHS's application. Thank you.

MR. ROATE: Scott Ingold.

MR. INGOLD: Good morning. My name is Scott Ingold; S-c-o-t-t, I-n-g-o-l-d.

Like a lot of folks here in the room, I'm a lifelong resident of Streator and a business owner for 33 years, Ingold accounting agency. A big part of our client base is senior citizens or people leaving the boomer generation and becoming seniors, and I'm here to vehemently oppose the closing of HSHS.

I've had many conversations with my clients who are so concerned about someone not -- about them having someone not to take them to their doctors' appointments. It's a sad commentary when we have 20,000 people in our surrounding area, and we have our seniors that cannot have a routine colonoscopy in the city that they spent their life in. It's a sad commentary when what few young people who choose to remain in our community cannot have a baby in their

own community.

I read in the paper -- and I quote -- in the big block print that "This will be bittersweet for Streator." This is not bittersweet. This is tragic to our community, and anybody that thinks this is going to be beneficial to us is the just not dealing with reality.

I've heard about statistics. I own an accounting agency; I understand statistics. But when does doing the right thing supersede statistics? That that's a good question for all people. If we keep sending everyone to have their baby out of town, to get their colonoscopy out of town, they're not going to come back some day, and we'll have no one to blame but ourselves. So I say shame on HSHS that this doesn't fit into your mission statement after 100-plus years.

Thank you very much. I do implore the Board to take into consideration the opposition to the closing. Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Scot Wrighton.

MR. WRIGHTON: Hi, I have written testimony. Again, I just give this and it be read it into the record.

Again, my name is Scot, S-c-o-t -- one "t" -- W-r-i-g-h-t-o-n, and I serve as the City manager here in Streator.

The City of Streator realizes that the way health care services are provided in rural communities is changing radically. We acknowledge that it is inefficient to have large inpatient facilities in small communities at a time when rural health care providers are paid based on how they reduce per capita admissions and that they're mandated to keep patients well without admitting them to the hospital whenever possible.

OSF has proposed a new strategy for future health care in Streator that may well be a model for other rural markets, and we're pleased that this model will be in Streator. But I want to speak to something a little different that is perhaps more to what your mission is, and that's to the process of this review.

The citizens of Streator have articulated far better than I can ever do how they feel about this. Our concern as a city is that this process has not been had in the right way.

It remains the City of Streator's opinion that the hospital had been under HSHS underresourced

and with increasing overhead to their balance sheet in a manner that may give a wrong impression. OSF should be credited and applauded for their hard work in the last couple of weeks in working with the Illinois General Assembly to try to get permission to have a standalone ER in Streator, but, ladies and gentlemen, they shouldn't have had to give those Herculean efforts. HSHS should have been required first to take care of that problem before that kind of last-minute rush had to occur.

There was an RFP process, and it went out to 16 different hospitals. That RFP process was short-circuited. I can attest to the fact that the City was in touch with a couple of other hospitals that were recipients of the data pack. There was no date established, and they were surprised about that because they were interested in the hospital. The RFP process was short-circuited, so we will never know whether or not there was another buyer who could have kept the hospital open.

You've already heard comments here which I won't repeat about competition, about the issues that this creates for ambulances, travel times, and access. So I'm here to ask you to implore you to change this

process. There will be other communities we know, rural communities in Illinois that will undergo these sorts of gut wrenching issues, and we implore you to take more of these issues into consideration because Streator as a community has been abused by this process, and we hope that you can make changes in the process so that other communities don't have to endure what Streator has had to endure.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: Jane Cavanaugh.

MS. CAVANAUGH: My name is Jane Cavanaugh; J-a-n-e, C-a-v-a-n-a-u-g-h.

I am a concerned citizen. A lot of people have already said what I wanted to say. I just have one other little thing to point out.

In the paper last night it says, "A minute before that change HSHS will shut down its inpatient." I understand it's up to the Board to approve or disapprove whether they shut down, not just automatically shut down.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: John Luphiys, L-u-p-h-i-y-s.

MR. ZUPANCIC: Zupancic, John?

MR. ROATE: Z-u-p-h-i- -- Z-u-p-h-i-y-s-i.

MR. ZUPANCIC: That isn't my name. Are you sure you want to call me up here?

MR. ROATE: I think it's you, sir. I apologize.

MR. ZUPANCIC: That's all right. I won't charge you for it. It's all free.

I'm just an old veteran that muddles around. I give the City Hall plenty of problems and everything else. I have to drive to Chicago, the VA, 300 miles, a full day's trip, and everything else just for certain things that the VA appropriates. They do a good job. This is the kind of treatment the people in Streator are going to get; you're going to have to drive to Chicago.

Pontiac is not very far, but when there's ice on the roads and everything, you can't get there. I'm fortunate enough to be healthy because I have a good doctor like Dr. -- isn't that -- anyway, Betty and all the people at the hospital treat you wonderful.

And one other thing I want to ask you people is, what are you going to do with our medical records,

living wills and that? Are you going to just have a big bonfire? I mean it. It could happen.

Same thing with your CPR. I was fortunate enough to be playing with a friend of mine -- down in Florida playing golf. He stepped up to tee and went to hit the ball and dropped over. I was fortunate enough to have CPR and revive him.

Things like this that the hospital has been -- programs like this they put out for the citizens to have is going out the door. And that beautiful clinic in LaSalle where the VA is, they do a wonderful job, but that isn't a hospital where you can go in and have somebody be nice to you. They treat you and respect you when you come in here.

MR. ROATE: Lastly, Clare Ranalli. Clare --

MS. RANALLI: Hiding down there. Sorry. I didn't have very far to go.

First of all, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Clare Ranalli, and I have had the honor and privilege of working with both OSF HealthCare System and HSHS for more years than I would care to admit.

I've listened today and heard a number of things, and I'm very familiar with this process. I

also grew up in a small town in Illinois, and a hospital closed so I understand the sentiment that's been expressed here today, but I do want to point out a few things I believe were said that were possibly misstatements.

One was that there was some sort of collaboration between two common orders that were shared orders. The orders, although they have Franciscan origin, of OSF and HSHS are different orders, and I can tell you because I've been involved in this process for some time that the only collaboration between the two orders was to ensure that the residents of Streator received appropriate care, and the work that they've done, I can honestly say in the many years that I've worked with hospitals throughout the hospitals throughout the state is unique and should be applauded.

The two systems coming together who, quite frankly, in reality are competitors in many ways to work together to assure appropriate delivery of care which is outpatient focused is truly amazing and something that I think will be wonderful for your community in the long run, although it may be painful to think about now.

I also would like to say that the allegations or statements that somehow St. Mary's intentionally tanked, for lack of a better word, itself by refusing to recruit doctors and refusing to somehow care for the community is belied by the many wonderful things -- and thank you for them -- that have been said about the care, and delivery, and respect that St. Mary's has provided to the community over the years.

Doctors simply are very difficult to recruit. They're difficult to recruit in Chicago; they're difficult to recruit in Peoria or Rockford, very difficult to recruit to many communities and certainly smaller communities throughout Illinois. That doesn't mean that there's anything bad about the community. Maybe we should call into question why the doctors are so difficult to recruit and work on that as a state, as a country, for rural health care areas but that's a fact.

So the reason that there aren't doctors is simply because the doctors were not willing to come. The reason is there aren't OB services is because there weren't obstetricians and trained OB nurses who were willing to work in the community to help deliver

babies. That's the reason the OB service closed.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: No, it's not.

MS. RANALLI: Why would a hospital not --

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MS. RANALLI: Okay. I will wrap up my comments. I also just want to point out the medical records will certainly be maintained by the system. That's part of the application that was filed with the State. That's part of the requirements of the State board. So records will be available.

And, lastly, I would just like to point out that the State process works very fairly. It will listen to your comments. I've seen it happen many times and appreciate them.

And the spirit that you have here today, I would really like you to take it and focus on the freestanding emergency center that OSF is working on. That will be an application before this board, and please, please come out as you have here today to support that application so you'll have emergency services in Streator. Thank you.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Is there anyone who wishes to testify who has not yet had an opportunity?

Would you like to make a comment, sir? Did you get a chance to fill out a form, as well?

MR. FLANDERS: I did fill out a form. I wasn't called.

MR. RIZZO: I thought I signed in. My name is Frank Rizzo, R-i-z-z-o. My comments are similar to what has been said. I was born and raised here, I'm going to die here. I think that the citizens of Streator deserve the facts printed in the paper on the bottom line, why did OSF choose to close Streator.

That's all I have to say.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you, sir.

(Applause.)

MR. ROATE: I apologize. John Flanders.

MR. FLANDERS: Thank you. My name is John Flanders, and I serve as the president and chief executive officer of St. Mary's Hospital in Streator, Illinois.

I want to provide some additional comments about the transaction agreement that we've reached with OSF, but prior to that I want to provide some facts about physician recruitment.

In the past 10 years HSHS and St. Mary's in Streator has recruited over 28 physicians. In the

couple years I've been here, I've recruited three positions. Of those 28 positions and the 3 that I recruited, 1 remains in this community.

We recruited those physicians by providing economic support to those physicians for two or more years so that they could build up a patient practice and establish that practice in this community, and they were unable to do that successfully because the previous comment that 2 in 10 people that live in this community seek their health care elsewhere.

So the facts are that. We did recruit physicians. We've not been successful in retaining those physicians.

If our application to discontinue services at St. Mary's is approved, we will donate all the existing St. Mary's Hospital facilities in Streator to OSF HealthCare. OSF HealthCare will use the existing St. Mary's facility to deliver outpatient services while they build a new ambulatory care facility, which is expected to take a couple of years.

The services that OSF will provide to the community include imaging, laboratory, primary care, and specialty physician clinics, and mammographies.

HSHS and OSF are seeking legislation that

would give the Health Facilities Services Review Board the authority to issue a license for a freestanding emergency center. If that legislation is enacted, OSF would seek a license to operate a 24-hour-by-7 emergency department at Streator. That department operated by OSF in this community will help ensure uninterrupted continuity of health care services to the citizens of Streator.

HSHS is also working closely with OSF to ensure that our employees have an opportunity to continue to work and live in the Streator community. Our colleagues are currently applying for and filling numerous Streator-based positions with OSF HealthCare, as well as other OSF HealthCare facilities in the area in professional and nonprofessional fields. Every effort will be made to maintain those jobs in the Streator community. We've also been meeting with OSF and will continue to meet with them to discuss how to best make the transition as seamless as possible.

If our application is approved, we plan to cease inpatient services at St. Mary's Hospital just prior to 7:00 a.m. on January 4th of 2016. OSF would then assume responsibility for all outpatient services at St. Mary's Hospital. They would maintain outpatient

services in the current building until the new ambulatory center is built and opened in Streator. After the new facility opens, the community will be engaged in how to best repurpose the existing campus.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Please wrap up your comments.

MR. FLANDERS: If the campus cannot be repurposed, OSF will tear down the building and restore the property.

While change is never easy, I firmly believe this collaboration is the best option for Streator going forward. We believe having OSF provide strong ambulatory health care services as part of a highly integrated system that includes physicians practicing across this region makes the most sense for the future of health care in Streator.

Thank you very much.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Is there anyone else who wishes to give testimony who has not yet had an opportunity?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Would you just tell us what is going to happen on November 17th at your meeting?

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: I definitely

will, sir.

Anyone else that wishes to give testimony?

Yes, ma'am.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I just feel like this is the place we need to be more often for the other issues. Along with health care, there are some other issues that Streator is facing, and there's so much energy and so much passion in this room, and we can get here, and be here, and do this same thing for other issues on the second -- third Wednesday at 7:00 for the council meeting. So I'm speaking for myself to get out and get here and make our wishes known here.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Very well. Thank you.

Seeing that there is no one else, is there anyone who has testified who wishes to give additional testimony?

Yes, Mr. Rizzo.

MR. RIZZO: My name is Frank Rizzo, and I got a feeling that this decision is already made, and I don't understand why St. Mary's hasn't used the top two floors for a nursing home, which nursing homes in the state of Illinois are highly profitable. That

will would surely overcome most of the loss.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you, Mr. Rizzo.

The project -- oh, I'm sorry.

MR. INGOLD: I just have one comment, sir. I spoke earlier.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Sir, your name?

MR. INGOLD: Scott Ingold.

Mr. Flanders just spoke about the urgent care. Urgent care is not a fully functioning hospital. They can spin this however they want. Urgent care is not a fully functioning hospital which the seniors of our community need.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Thank you.

This project is scheduled for consideration by the Illinois Health Facilities Review Board at its November 17th, 2015, meeting. The meeting will be held at the Bolingbrook Golf Club. The address is 2001 Rodeo Drive, Bolingbrook, Illinois.

Interested parties can view the exemption application and related correspondence by going to our website at www.hfsrb.Illinois.gov. You can also attend the meeting and give further testimony at that meeting by filling out the public participation form

found on our website.

Now, if there are no other requests to speak --

MR. RIZZO: I got one. Could you put that location any further away from the community in the Streator? Are you going to have bus transportation?

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: No, sir. The State Board does not provide bus transportation. I will note that we have about eight meetings a year, six of which are in that location. It's been a pretty consistent practice for our board.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Has the decision already been made?

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: No, sir. The application will be considered at the November 17th meeting.

Now, if there are no further requests to speak -- oh, I'm sorry.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was just going to ask whether there's any opportunity to move that meeting from Bolingbrook to a closer location here in Streator perhaps in our former armory. Does it have to be in Bolingbrook is the question.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: Ma'am, this is a

State board that has jurisdiction of facilities throughout the entire state, and while I can appreciate the difficulty it's going to take for you folks to get out there, we have numerous applications that cover the entire state. So we set it out in the Bolingbrook; we've been pretty consistent about having them there, and I don't anticipate us moving it from that location.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: A Streator decision made in Bolingbrook.

HEARING OFFICER MORADO: So with that said, I deem this public hearing adjourned. I thank you very much for your cooperation and attendance today at this hearing.

Thank you.

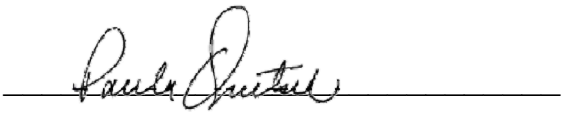
(Off the record at 11:09 a.m.)

CERTIFICATE OF SHORTHAND REPORTER

I, Paula M. Quetsch, Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 084-003733, CSR, and a Notary Public in and for the County of Kane, State of Illinois, the officer before whom the foregoing proceedings were taken, do certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and correct record of the proceedings, that said proceedings were taken by me stenographically and thereafter reduced to typewriting under my supervision, and that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this case and have no interest, financial or otherwise, in its outcome.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 5th day of November, 2015.

My commission expires: October 16, 2017



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State of Illinois

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